BYE(POLAR)

BY: MSTR.FRLSS

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ACCESSIBILITY: THIS PICTURE BOOK IS FOR EVERYONE AND IS FREE TO READ FOR MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS FOR EVERYBODY.

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BIPOLAR

HAVING TWO OPPOSITE POLES OR EXTREMES. IN HEALTH, IT REFERS TO BIPOLAR DISORDER, A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION CAUSING EXTREME SHIFTS BETWEEN HIGH ENERGY AND LOW MOOD.

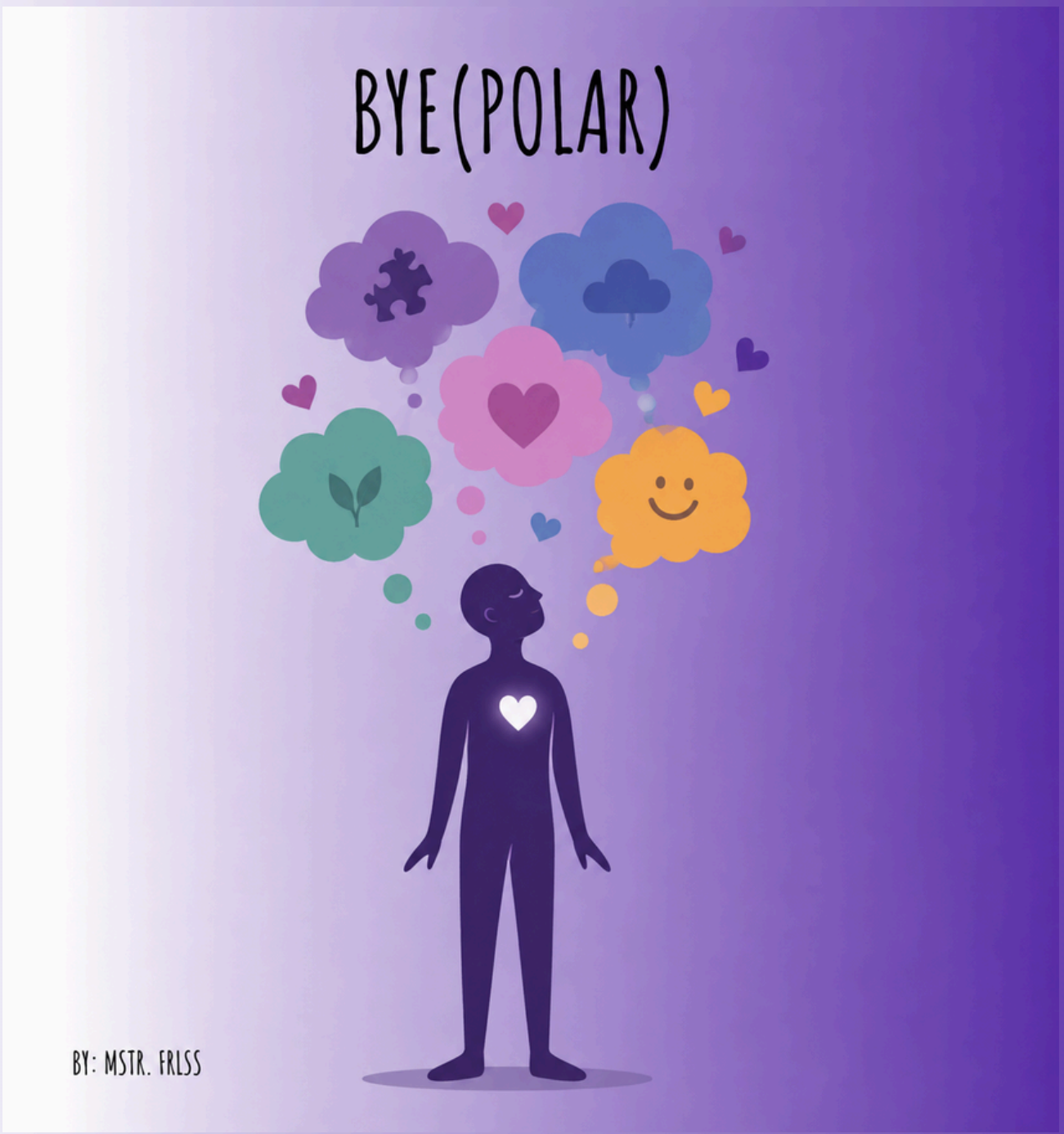
BYE

A SHORT, INFORMAL WAY TO SAY GOODBYE.

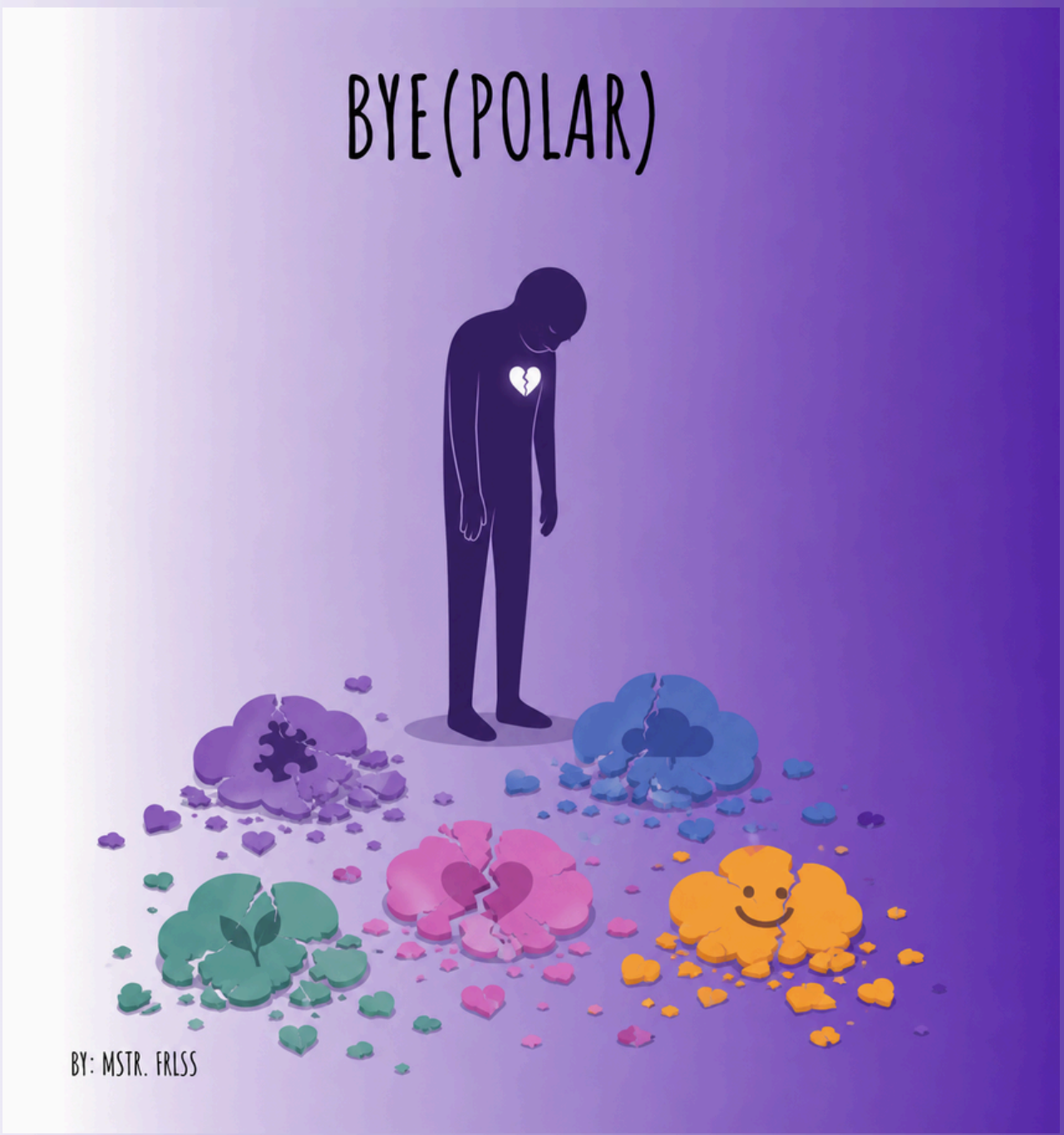
POLAR

SERVING AS A GUIDE.

BY: MSTR.FRLSS



LISTEN TO YOUR EMOTIONS...



...OR ELSE THEY WILL BE BROKEN.

Our story begins with three little sprouts, all born on the exact same day, in the exact same year, but in three completely different places. Their names were Xian, Ian, and Beyblade. This was the start of their unique journeys—three separate paths destined to shape the future.

XIAN IS HALF-CHINESE AND HALF-FILIPINO, CARRYING THE RESEMBLANCE OF THE GRANDFATHER HE LOST FOURTEEN YEARS AGO. PASSED DOWN THROUGH GENERATIONS, HIS GRANDFATHER'S BELT STANDS AS A SYMBOL OF DIGNITY—THE PRIDE OF A MAN WHO STOOD STRONG AGAINST A JUDGMENTAL WORLD. TODAY, XIAN CARRIES THAT SAME PRIDE, FACING EVERY CHALLENGE AHEAD WITH UNWAVERING STRENGTH.

IAN IS THE MIRROR OPPOSITE OF XIAN. THOUGH HE IS ALSO HALF-CHINESE, IAN FEELS DEEPLY CONNECTED TO HIS FILIPINO ROOTS. BRIGHT, CHEERFUL, AND FULL OF WARMTH, HE VIEWS THE WORLD THROUGH A LENS OF LOVE AND PEACE. TO IAN, LIFE TREATS EVERYONE EQUALLY—RICH OR POOR, BIG OR SMALL—AND EVERY EMOTION WE FEEL MATTERS.

FINALLY, MEET BEYBLADE—THE MAIN CHARACTER OF OUR STORY. A PERFECT BLEND OF XIAN AND IAN, HE SHARES THEIR STRONG WILL, PROUD SPIRIT, AND DUAL HERITAGE. ON THE OUTSIDE, HE IS A BRIGHT AND CARING BOY. ON THE INSIDE, HE HOLDS A QUIET PAIN, BELIEVING REVENGE IS THE SWEETEST REMEDY FOR HIS HURT—A HURT CAUSED BY A FAMILY THAT VIEWED HIS VERY EXISTENCE AS A MISTAKE.

AS XIAN GREW INTO A TEENAGER, HE EASILY WON OVER THE CAMPUS—ESPECIALLY THE GIRLS, WHO ALL ADMIRED HIM. BUT AROUND HIS CREW, A DARKER SIDE EMERGED. THEY WALKED THE HALLWAYS LIKE THEY OWNED THE PLACE, ALWAYS SEARCHING FOR A FIGHT TO PROVE THEY WERE THE STRONGEST, SCARIEST GROUP AROUND.

IN GRADE 10, XIAN STOOD UP TO A CLASSMATE, COURAGEOUSLY FIGHTING TO DEFEND A FRIEND WHO COULDN'T FIGHT FOR HIMSELF. BUT XIAN WAS DEFEATED. THOUGH OTHERS WANTED TO AVENGE HIM, HIS CRUSHED PRIDE MADE HIM STEP BACK AND LET THE FIGHT GO. THIS MARKED THE BEGINNING OF A DARK SEASON—ONE MADE EVEN HARDER WHEN HE LOST BOTH OF HIS GRANDPARENTS IN THE SAME YEAR, ONLY MONTHS APART.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL WAS FULL OF LIFE AND LAUGHTER FOR IAN. EACH YEAR BROUGHT A NEW CIRCLE OF FRIENDS, ENDLESS BASKETBALL GAMES WITH HIS CREW, CONSTANT PRACTICE SESSIONS, AND A NEW CRUSH TO SWOON OVER. BUT IN GRADE 10, TRAGEDY STRUCK WHEN HIS GRANDPARENTS PASSED AWAY. EVEN THROUGH HIS OWN TEARS, IAN PUT HIS MOTHER FIRST, HOLDING HER CLOSE IN HER GRIEF. THAT YEAR, THE WORLD HE KNEW SHIFTED FOREVER.

FORCED TO GROW UP TOO SOON, IAN CARRIED A QUIET SADNESS EVERYWHERE HE WENT. HE BEGAN TO REALIZE A SIMPLE TRUTH: NOT EVERY DAY IS OKAY, AND THAT'S ALRIGHT. THE LOSS OF HIS GRANDPARENTS WEIGHED HEAVILY ON HIS HEART, BUT AS HE REACHED HIS 18TH BIRTHDAY, HE CHOSE TO KEEP MOVING FORWARD— HOLDING TIGHTLY TO EVERY PRECIOUS MEMORY THEY LEFT BEHIND.

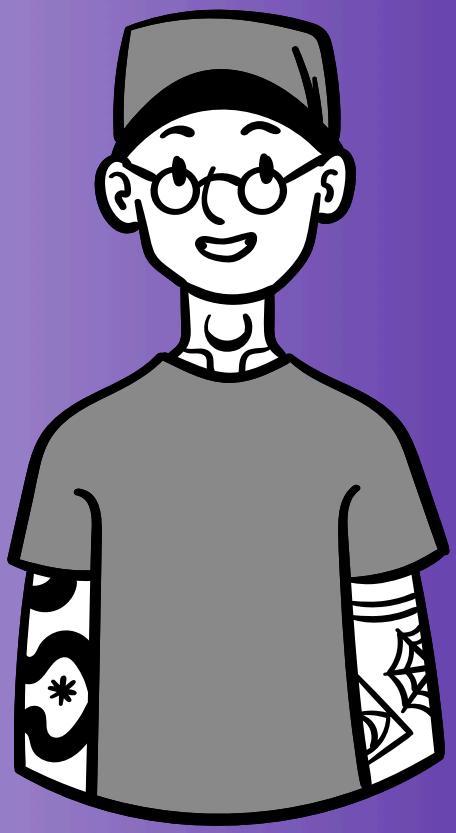
IN HIGH SCHOOL, BEYBLADE EMBODIED THE BEST OF BOTH XIAN AND IAN. HE WAS THOUGHTFUL, ACHIEVED HIGH GRADES, EARNED THE ADMIRATION OF HIS PEERS, AND SHARED ENDLESS GOOD TIMES WITH HIS FRIENDS. DEMONSTRATING STRONG LEADERSHIP, HE BECAME A TOP OFFICER IN THE CITIZENSHIP ADVANCEMENT TRAINING (CAT) BEFORE SENIOR HIGH. WHEN HIS GRANDPARENTS PASSED AWAY, HE FOUND COMFORT IN KNOWING THEY WERE IN A BETTER PLACE—YET DEEP DOWN, A QUIET STORM BREWED AS HE CONTINUED FORWARD, DRIVEN BY A LINGERING THIRST FOR REVENGE.

TURNING 18, BEYBLADE TOOK ON THE WORLD WITH A BRAVE FACE, HIDING THE LINGERING WEIGHT OF HIS PAST. HE CONQUERED SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL WITH A BRIGHT SMILE, EARNING A REPUTATION AS A TRUE 'DARK HORSE'—A DEPENDABLE CLASS PRESIDENT LOADED WITH ACHIEVEMENTS. YET BENEATH THE ACCOLADES, A QUIET SORROW DEEPENED. BELIEVING LOVE WAS BEYOND HIS REACH, HE MADE THE BOLD CHOICE TO PAUSE HIS STUDIES AND FORGE A BRAND-NEW PATH FOR HIS FUTURE.

AFTER COMPLETING SENIOR HIGH, XIAN, IAN, AND BEYBLADE MADE A BOLD CHOICE. THEY PAUSED THEIR TRADITIONAL STUDIES AND ENROLLED AT A TRAINING SCHOOL, DETERMINED TO MASTER THEIR CRAFT AND BECOME GRAPHIC DESIGNERS. DRIVEN BY THE BELIEF THAT THEIR TRUE JOURNEY WOULD PEAK AT AGE 21, ALL THREE SECURED ROLES AS DESIGN GENERALISTS FOR AN ONLINE GIFT SHOP—TURNING THEIR PASSION INTO AN INTENSE, WORKAHOLIC ROUTINE.

After a month of intense grind at work, Beyblade opened up to a senior coworker about his deepest fears—confessing that he imagined a future where he grew old alone. His coworker smiled and offered words of wisdom: 'No matter what happens, you will never truly be alone in this world.' Those words struck a chord. Realizing the truth in them, Beyblade opened his heart, ready to search for a partner who would accept him for the man he was becoming.

A FEW WEEKS LATER, A PHOTO ON HIS PHONE CAUGHT BEYBLADE'S EYE—AND INSTANTLY, HIS HEART KNEW SHE WAS THE ONE. HER NAME WAS XAYHANG. BEAUTIFUL AND RADIANT, SHE CAPTURED HIS THOUGHTS AS HE FINALLY ALLOWED HIMSELF TO OPEN HIS HEART TO LOVE AGAIN. AFTER COUNTLESS LATE-NIGHT CONVERSATIONS AND GROWING CLOSER EACH DAY, BEYBLADE GATHERED THE COURAGE TO CONFESS HIS FEELINGS. THEY AGREED TO MEET AT THE MALL, STEPPING TOGETHER INTO THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THEIR LOVE STORY.



ON MARCH 25, BEYBLADE AND XAYHANG MET IN PERSON FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME. FROM THAT MOMENT, BEYBLADE KNEW SHE WOULD CHANGE HIS LIFE FOREVER, INSPIRING HIM TO LOVE WITH A FULL HEART ONCE MORE. THEY SHARED A SIMPLE MEAL AT A FAST-FOOD SPOT, SNAPPED ADORABLE PHOTOS AT A PHOTOBOOTH, AND WANDERED THROUGH TWO DIFFERENT MALLS, TALKING ENDLESSLY TO LEARN ALL ABOUT EACH OTHER. BY THE END OF THE DAY, AS THEY HEADED HOME, THEIR HEARTS WERE ALIGNED—XAYHANG WANTED HIM AS HER BOYFRIEND, AND A BEAUTIFUL NEW RELATIONSHIP OFFICIALLY BEGAN.

TO EVERYONE AROUND THEM, THEY WERE THE PICTURE-PERFECT COUPLE, FULLY SUPPORTED AND LOVED BY BOTH OF THEIR FAMILIES. BEYBLADE BECAME XAYHANG'S STEADY ANCHOR—GUIDING HER, COMFORTING HER IN SAD MOMENTS, AND JOINING HER AT CHURCH EVERY SUNDAY. DESPITE HIS BUSY SCHEDULE, HE TRAVELED TO HER CAMPUS FOR DATES, EXHAUSTED YET HAPPY BECAUSE SHE WAS WORTH EVERY MILE. BUT OUT OF NOWHERE, A SHADOW FELL. BEYBLADE COULDN'T SLEEP AT NIGHT, AND THE EXHAUSTION BEGAN SPILLING INTO HIS WORK LIFE.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS, BEYBLADE FELT GENUINE HAPPINESS, STEPPING OUT FROM THE SHADOWS OF HIS PAST. YET AT NIGHT, HE REMAINED A RESTLESS SOUL, STARING INTO THE DARK WITH A HEAVY HEART. PRESSURE MOUNTED AT WORK WHEN HIS BOSS CONFRONTED HIM OVER SUDDEN, IMPULSIVE DECISIONS—UNAWARE OF THE DEEPER REASONS DRIVING HIS ACTIONS. THROUGH IT ALL, HIS LOVE WITH XAYHANG REMAINED HIS SANCTUARY... UNTIL THAT FATEFUL TURNING POINT.

WITHIN DAYS, BEYBLADE SEEMED LIKE A DIFFERENT PERSON AS HE REALIZED HOW HIS CHOICES IMPACTED THOSE AROUND HIM—INCLUDING HIS EX-GIRLFRIEND. DRIVEN BY FRUSTRATION, HE BROUGHT HIS FATHER AND XAYHANG TO HER TOWN, DESPERATE TO SETTLE THE PAST BEFORE IT COULD RUIN HIS PRESENT. HE WAS TERRIFIED OF LOSING THE WONDERFUL LIFE HE HAD BUILT WITH XAYHANG. YET IN THAT HEAVY MOMENT, BEYBLADE LOOKED AT XAYHANG AND CONFESSED THE TRUTH: SOMETHING INSIDE HIS EMOTIONS WAS DEEPLY WRONG.

BEYBLADE BEGAN TO SUSPECT HE MIGHT BE LIVING WITH ADHD OR BIPOLAR DISORDER, THOUGH HE WASN'T CERTAIN. XAYHANG URGED HIM TO SHARE HIS INTERNAL BATTLE WITH HIS FAMILY, BUT FEAR HELD HIM BACK. MASKING HIS CONFUSION, HIS FRUSTRATION SPILLED INTO HIS JOB UNTIL HE FINALLY QUIT. TENSIONS FLARED WITH HIS BROTHER, LEAVING BEYBLADE FEELING LIKE A FAILURE WHO ONLY CAUSED HARM. YET DEEP DOWN, A SPARK OF HOPE REMAINED. WANTING TO PURSUE A COLLEGE DEGREE AND HEAL, HE GAVE HIMSELF THE ULTIMATE GIFT ON HIS BIRTHDAY: THE COURAGE TO VISIT A HOSPITAL AND SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP.

FOLLOWING HIS BIRTHDAY, BEYBLADE'S FAMILY ACCOMPANIED HIM TO THE HOSPITAL FOR HIS EVALUATION. XAYHANG STOOD FAITHFULLY BY HIS SIDE, DEEPLY CONCERNED FOR HIS WELL-BEING. WHEN THE DOCTOR CONFIRMED A DIAGNOSIS OF BIPOLAR DISORDER, A FLOOD OF MEMORIES WASHED OVER BEYBLADE. EVERY PAST MISTAKE, OUTBURST, AND MOMENT OF PAIN SUDDENLY MADE SENSE—UNRAVELING THE DEEP-SEATED WOUNDS FROM A CHILDHOOD SPENT FEELING AT WAR WITH A CRUEL WORLD.

PAINFUL QUESTIONS ECHOED IN BEYBLADE'S MIND: 'IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME?' OR 'WAS I EVER MEANT TO EXIST AT ALL?' THE CHAOS OF HIS PAST FINALLY MADE SENSE WHEN ALIGNED WITH HIS DIAGNOSIS—BIPOLAR 1 DISORDER WITH MIXED EPISODES. HE SEARCHED FOR ANSWERS, TRYING TO COMPREHEND HOW A ONCE-HAPPY CHILDHOOD HAD SPIRALED INTO DARK DAYS WHERE HE WANTED TO END IT ALL. AND AFTER HIS MOTHER REVEALED THE HIDDEN TRUTHS ABOUT THE YEAR HE WAS BORN, THE URGE TO SEEK REVENGE FLICKERED ONCE MORE.

NINE MONTHS OF WAITING FOR THEIR YOUNGEST CHILD WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A TIME OF CELEBRATION. BUT WHILE CARRYING BEYBLADE, HIS MOTHER SUFFERED A HEARTBREAKING BETRAYAL WHEN SHE CAUGHT HER HUSBAND CHEATING. THOUGH THEY PATCHED THINGS UP FOR THE SAKE OF THE FAMILY, HER WORLD HAD ALTERED. ON AUGUST 15, BEYBLADE ARRIVED—A SWEET, SMILING BABY WHO COMPLETED THEIR FAMILY OF ALL BOYS. BUT EVEN AS HIS ARRIVAL BROUGHT JOY, A LINGERING SHADOW REMAINED IN HIS MOTHER'S HEART.

A CHAOTIC TIMELINE OF MEMORIES FLOODED BEYBLADE'S MIND. EVER SINCE HE WAS SMALL, HE FELT A DEEP NEED TO PROTECT HIS MOTHER, MIRRORING THE TENDER LOVE SHE HAD SHOWN HIM AS A BABY. BEAUTIFUL FAMILY MOMENTS WERE INTERTWINED WITH DARK, DESTRUCTIVE YEARS. WHEN HIS FATHER'S RELATIVES TURNED AGAINST HIS MOTHER, BEYBLADE TRIED TO STAND AS HER DEFENDER—YET HE FELT HELPLESS AGAINST THE HOSTILITY. THOUGH HIS MOTHER TRIED HER BEST TO SHIELD HIM FROM THE PAIN, EVERY UNSPOKEN TRAUMA STAYED ETCHED DEEP WITHIN HIS MIND.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROOTS OF HIS BIPOLAR DISORDER ONLY FUELED BEYBLADE'S DESIRE FOR JUSTICE. THE RELATIVES WHO HAD CAUSED HIS MOTHER PAIN FELT LIKE ENEMIES WHO OWED A DEBT. YET, ALONGSIDE HIS ANGER CAME A NEWFOUND DISCIPLINE. BEYBLADE COMMITTED TO HIS DOCTOR'S GUIDANCE—DILIGENTLY TAKING HIS MEDICATION AND LEARNING TO MASTER HIS WILD EMOTIONS. AS HEALING BEGAN TO TAKE ROOT, HE CHANNELED HIS INTENSITY TOWARD A FRESH START. RECLAIMED AND EMPOWERED, HE PREPARED TO EMBARK ON A NEW CHAPTER: RETURNING TO SCHOOL AS A COLLEGE STUDENT.

XAYHANG LISTENED INTENTLY TO EVERY PIECE OF BEYBLADE'S PAST, GAINING A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF HIS JOURNEY WITH BIPOLAR DISORDER. RATHER THAN STEPPING AWAY, HER LOVE REMAINED CONSTANT—STANDING BY HIM THROUGH EVERY HIGH AND LOW. TOGETHER, THEY KEPT THEIR SWEET ROUTINES: ATTENDING CHURCH EVERY SUNDAY, SHARING QUIET DATES, AND STRENGTHENING THEIR BOND DAY BY DAY. WHEN BEYBLADE OFFICIALLY ENROLLED AS A FIRST-YEAR INFORMATION SYSTEMS STUDENT, XAYHANG BEAMED WITH PRIDE. HE WASN'T JUST KILLING TIME ANYMORE; HE WAS PURPOSEFULLY INVESTING IN HIS FUTURE.

STEPPING BACK INTO THE WORLD OF EDUCATION, BEYBLADE WHOLEHEARTEDLY EMBRACED THIS NEW BEGINNING. ON THE EVE OF HIS FIRST DAY AS A FIRST-YEAR COLLEGE STUDENT, ANTICIPATION KEPT HIM AWAKE ALL NIGHT. A FRESH START, NEW FRIENDSHIPS, AND AN UNFAMILIAR CAMPUS AWAITED HIS ARRIVAL. BY HIS SIDE IN SPIRIT, XAYHANG BEAMED WITH PRIDE, KNOWING JUST HOW FIERCELY HE HAD FOUGHT TO STAND IN THAT CLASSROOM ONCE MORE. THIS WAS THE TURNING POINT—A VIBRANT NEW CHAPTER PACKED WITH FRESH HOPE, POTENTIAL, AND EXCITING CHALLENGES.

BEYBLADE AND XAYHANG EMBRACED THEIR COLLEGE JOURNEY SIDE BY SIDE, WORKING HARD TO BUILD THE FUTURE THEY DREAMED OF. AS STUDENTS, THEY SHARED TOOLS, ADVICE, AND ENCOURAGEMENT. WHENEVER TECH CHALLENGES AROSE IN XAYHANG'S SCHOOLWORK, BEYBLADE NATURALLY STEPPED IN—USING HIS COMPUTER EXPERTISE TO GUIDE HER. IN RETURN, XAYHANG CHEERED HIM ON, DEEPLY PROUD OF HIS STEADY DEDICATION TO HIS STUDIES. NO MATTER HOW BUSY COLLEGE LIFE BECAME, THEY ALWAYS SET ASIDE QUIET MOMENTS TO CELEBRATE THEIR MONTHSARIES AND ANNIVERSARIES TOGETHER.

COMPLETING HIS FIRST YEAR OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS BROUGHT UNEXPECTED CHANGES. SECTION RESHUFFLES MEANT SAYING GOODBYE TO NEW FRIENDS, LEAVING BEYBLADE FEELING ISOLATED WITH EVERY PASSING SEMESTER. BY HIS SECOND YEAR, HE ADAPTED TO A HYBRID SCHEDULE OF ONLINE AND FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES. HE FOUND COMFORT IN HANGING OUT WITH HIS CAMPUS BROS DURING BREAK TIMES, MEETING UP AT A LOCAL SHOP NEAR THEIR TEMPORARY CAMPUS TO SMOKE. BUT DURING THE SECOND SEMESTER, A SINGLE LAPSE IN JUDGMENT TURNED HIS WORLD UPSIDE DOWN: HE BROUGHT A DISPOSABLE VAPE TO SCHOOL, USED IT, AND WAS CAUGHT RED-HANDED BY HIS PROGRAM HEAD. SUDDENLY, EVERYTHING HE HAD BUILT WAS PUT AT RISK.

FACING HIS CAMPUS SUPERIORS LEFT BEYBLADE FEELING DEFEATED AND DEEPLY DEPRESSED. SUSPENDED FROM CLASSES, HE WAS ASSIGNED COMMUNITY SERVICE AROUND CAMPUS AS PENANCE FOR HIS RULE-BREAKING. WATCHING HIS HARD-EARNED REPUTATION CRUMBLE WEIGHED HEAVILY ON HIS SPIRIT. WORSE STILL, THE FALLOUT LEAKED INTO HIS PERSONAL LIFE: HIS RECKLESS ACTIONS, ERRATIC EMOTIONS, AND POOR CHOICES CREATED PAINFUL FRICTION IN HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH XAYHANG.

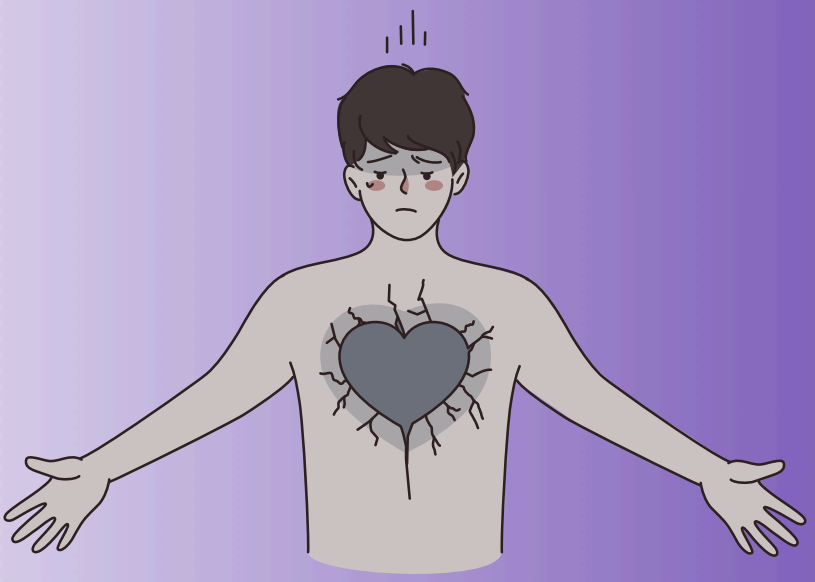
FREQUENT ARGUMENTS BEGAN TO TEAR AT XAYHANG AND BEYBLADE, SPARKED BY PETTY MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND LINGERING INSECURITIES. WHEN BEYBLADE GREW CLOSE TO A FEMALE CLASSMATE, JEALOUSY FLARED BETWEEN THEM, PUSHING A CONFUSED BEYBLADE TO THE BRINK OF WALKING AWAY. A HEAVY CLOUD SETTLED OVER HIS MIND, MAKING LIFE FEEL HOLLOW AND MEANINGLESS. AS HIS BIPOLAR DISORDER FLARED UP ONCE MORE, ANGER CONSUMED HIM—DIRECTED AT HIS FRIENDS, HIS FAMILY, AND MOST BITTERLY, AT HIMSELF FOR LOSING CONTROL AGAIN.

BEYBLADE'S HAPPINESS TWISTED INTO COLD PRIDE, WHILE HIS SADNESS DEEPENED INTO PITCH-BLACK DESPAIR. HIS BIPOLAR CONDITION CONSUMED HIM FROM WITHIN, UNTIL HE BEGAN TO VIEW HIMSELF AS A MONSTER—DESTRUCTIVE TO EVERYTHING HE TOUCHED, YET HARDENED AND UNBREAKABLE. HE FOUGHT AGAINST THE OVERWHELMING WAVE OF MIXED EMOTIONS TEARING THROUGH HIS MIND. MEDICINE ALONE DIDN'T FEEL LIKE THE ANSWER; HE DESPERATELY NEEDED GENUINE HELP. IN HIS ISOLATION, HE REALIZED HE WAS BECOMING JUST LIKE XIAN AND IAN.

IAN STANDS ON THE LEFT, BEYBLADE IN THE MIDDLE, AND XIAN ON THE RIGHT—YET THEY ARE ALL REFLECTIONS OF A SINGLE SOUL. THESE THREE FIGURES ARE ONE AND THE SAME: A YOUNG MAN NAMED CHRISTIAN. EACH NAME REPRESENTS A NICKNAME, A DISTINCT CHAPTER, AND A DIFFERENT TIMELINE IN HIS LIFE, LEADING HIM TO VIEW HIMSELF THROUGH THE LENS OF ALTER EGOS. AMPLIFIED BY HIS BIPOLAR DISORDER, HIS MIND SHIFTS BETWEEN THESE IDENTITIES. DRIVEN BY IMMENSE PRIDE AND AN UNBREAKABLE WILL, CHRISTIAN BELIEVES HE CAN CONQUER ANY OBSTACLE; YET, BENEATH THE ARMOR, HIS UNMANAGED EMOTIONS CONTINUE TO BE SWEPT UP BY THE RECURRING STORM OF HIS CONDITION.

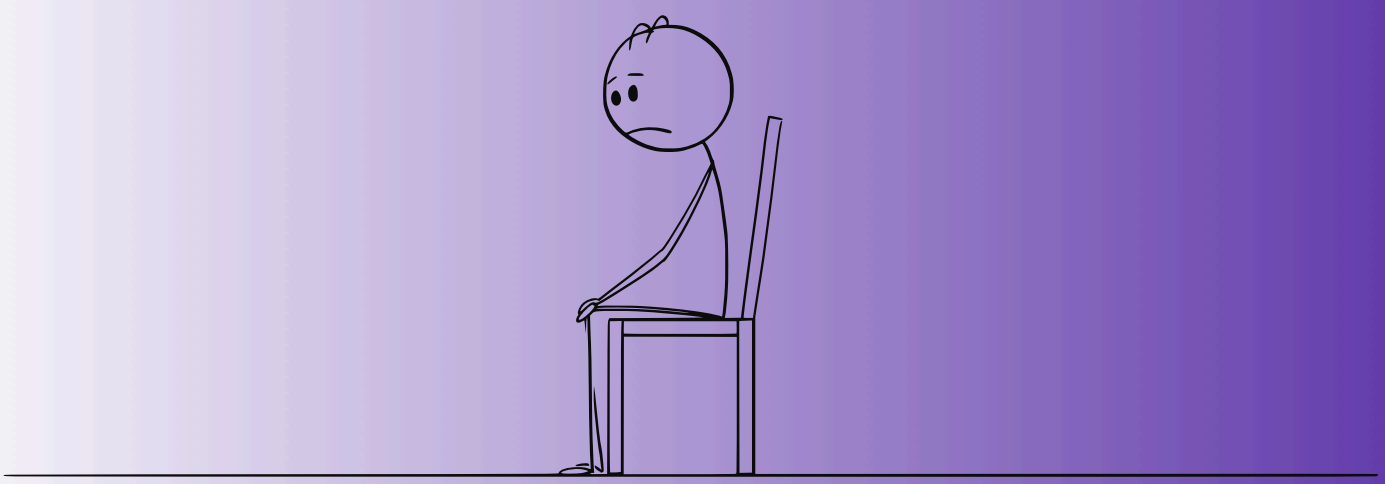
CHRISTIAN—THE SINGLE HEART BEHIND XIAN, IAN, AND BEYBLADE—WRESTLED WITH HEAVY, LINGERING THOUGHTS, WONDERING IF HIS LIFE WAS A MISTAKEN TWIST OF FATE. DRIVEN BY DESPERATION, HE HAD ALWAYS RUSHED INTO CHOICES WITHOUT GUARDING AGAINST THE FALLOUT. BUT AFTER A YEAR OF SILENT SOUL-SEARCHING, HE COULD NO LONGER DENY THE WARNING SIGNS: HIS SHIFTING MOODS, ERRATIC BEHAVIOR, AND THE STRAIN IN HOW HE SPOKE TO THEA, THE GIRL HE HAD ALWAYS KNOWN AS XAYHANG. HE DIDN'T NEED ANOTHER MASK OR ALTER EGO; HE NEEDED REAL TREATMENT, PROFESSIONAL HELP, AND INNER PEACE. IT WAS TIME TO LET THE WIND CARRY AWAY THE ASHES OF HIS PAST SO HE COULD FINALLY HEAL AND MOVE ON.

A PAINFUL TRUTH HIT BEYBLADE: HIS UNTREATED INNER CHAOS WAS HURTING THE PEOPLE HE LOVED MOST, ESPECIALLY XAYHANG. WITH A HEAVY HEART, HE CAME TO A FIRM CONCLUSION—THEIR RELATIONSHIP HAD TO END. THOUGH XAYHANG DESPERATELY TRIED TO MEND THE CRACKS AND RESOLVE THEIR PAST ARGUMENTS, BEYBLADE FELT IT WAS TOO LATE. HE CONVINCED HIMSELF THAT SHE WOULD BE HAPPIER AND FIND PEACE IF HE LET HER GO. SHE NEEDED ROOM TO GROW ON HER OWN, JUST AS HE NEEDED TIME TO HEAL HIS OWN MIND. LETTING HER GO WAS THE HARDEST DECISION HE HAD EVER MADE, BUT IT WAS A NECESSARY STEP TOWARD MANAGING HIS BIPOLAR DISORDER.



AFTER ENDING THINGS WITH XAYHANG, BEYBLADE FELT COMPLETELY SHATTERED LIKE FRAGILE GLASS. GUILT WEIGHED ON HIM AS HISTORY SEEMED TO REPEAT ITSELF—ONCE AGAIN, HE HAD BROKEN THE HEART OF A GOOD, LOVING WOMAN. EVEN THOUGH HE REGRETTED THE PAIN HE CAUSED, HE HELD ONTO THE BELIEF THAT DISTANCE WAS NECESSARY FOR TRUE HEALING. FROM AFAR, HE QUIETLY WISHED FOR HER WELL-BEING: THAT SHE WAS SAFE, EATING WELL, AND FINDING PEACE. HOLDING ONTO THE QUIET BELIEF THAT LOVE STILL LINGERED, BEYBLADE SEARCHED FOR A GLIMMER OF HOPE—HOPING THAT ONE DAY, WHEN HE WAS WHOLE AGAIN, HE COULD MEND THE PIECES HE HAD BROKEN.

A FEW DAYS LATER, BEYBLADE FOCUSED ON HIS MEDICAL CHECKUPS, REINFORCING HIS DECISION TO BREAK UP WITH XAYHANG. WHILE HE LONGED TO HAVE HER NEAR TO SPEED UP HIS RECOVERY, HE KNEW TRUE HEALING COULDN'T BE RUSHED OR DEPENDENT ON SOMEONE ELSE. HE BELIEVED HE NEEDED TO REBUILD HIMSELF FULLY BEFORE THEY COULD EVER HOPE FOR A FRESH START. WHEN HE EXPLAINED HIS NEED FOR CLOSURE, XAYHANG TEARFULLY AGREED. BEYBLADE KNEW HOW PAINFUL IT WAS FOR HER TO LET GO, YET BOTH UNDERSTOOD IT WAS VITAL FOR THEIR EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING. WITH A QUIET, SHARED UNDERSTANDING, THEY OFFICIALLY PARTED WAYS.

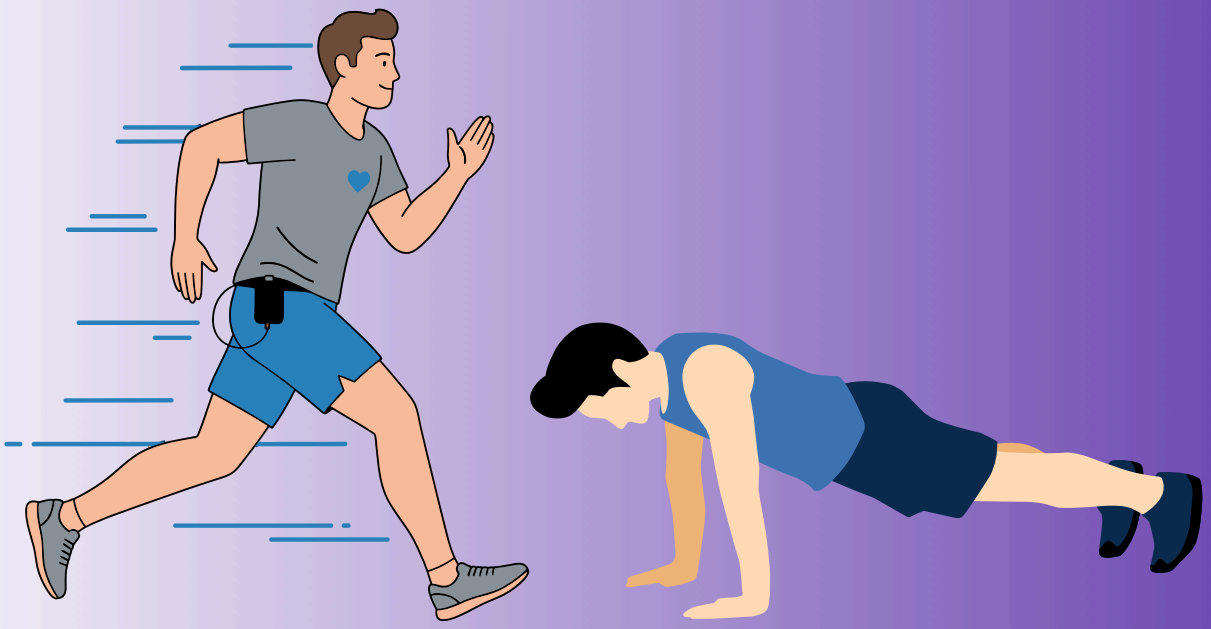


THOUGH LOVE STILL BURNED DEEP IN BEYBLADE'S HEART, HE KNEW XAYHANG NEEDED DISTANCE SO THEY COULD BOTH FIND PEACE. HE STRUGGLED TO NAVIGATE HIS CHAOTIC EMOTIONS, STILL VIEWING HIS STORY AS INTERTWINED WITH HERS. HE HELD ONTO THE HOPEFUL BELIEF THAT ONCE HE CONQUERED HIS INNER BATTLES, THEY WOULD REUNITE STRONGER THAN EVER. YET, ABIDING BY HIS CHOICE WAS AGONIZING—DOUBT, FRUSTRATION, AND ENDLESS OVERTHINKING CLOUDED HIS DAYS. CHANNELING HIS INNER PRIDE AND DETERMINATION, BEYBLADE MADE A PROMISE TO HIMSELF: HE HAD TO STAY STRONG, GROW MORE GENUINE, AND EVOLVE INTO A FAR BETTER MAN THAN HE HAD EVER BEEN.

PREPARING FOR HIS UPCOMING PSYCHIATRIC CHECKUP, BEYBLADE SPENT DAYS THOUGHTFULLY LISTING HIS PAST ACTIONS, TRIGGERS, AND PATTERNS. HE CAREFULLY REVIEWED HIS HEATED ARGUMENTS WITH HIS FATHER, HIS CONDUCT IN HIS RECENT RELATIONSHIP, AND HOW HE ENGAGED WITH FELLOW STUDENTS—IDENTIFYING EVERYTHING THAT AGGRAVATED HIS BIPOLAR DISORDER. WRITING THEM DOWN GAVE HIM CLARITY ON WHAT HABITS TO BREAK AND WHAT POSITIVE STEPS TO TAKE. ARMED WITH SELF-AWARENESS, HE POURED HIS ENERGY INTO HEALTHY ROUTINES: WORKING OUT, ENJOYING ONLINE GAMES, AND TAKING ON LEADERSHIP AS A CAMPUS OFFICER AS HE PROUDLY STEPPED INTO HIS THIRD YEAR OF COLLEGE.

WITH HIS 24TH BIRTHDAY DRAWING NEAR, CHRISTIAN STOOD READY TO EMBRACE A BOLDER, STRONGER VERSION OF HIMSELF. HE GROUND HIMSELF IN REALITY, ACCEPTING THAT XIAN, IAN, AND BEYBLADE WERE JUST TEMPORARY SHIELDS BUILT BY HIS IMAGINATION. BORN IN AUGUST UNDER THE SIGN OF THE LEO AND THE SPIRIT OF A DARK HORSE, HE EMBODIED COURAGE, PRIDE, AND NATURAL LEADERSHIP. CHRISTIAN REALIZED HE WAS BORN FEARLESS FOR A PURPOSE: TO CONFRONT LIFE'S GREATEST TRIALS AND TAME THE STORM WITHIN. LIVING WITH BIPOLAR DISORDER WASN'T A GENERATIONAL CURSE— IT WAS A UNIQUE SOURCE OF STRENGTH, PROVING THAT THERE IS PROFOUND POWER IN BEING BEAUTIFULLY DIFFERENT.

IN THE AFTERMATH OF HIS BREAKUP WITH XAYHANG, BEYBLADE CHANNELED HIS ENERGY BACK INTO TRAINING AT THE GYM. THIS WASN'T ABOUT SEEKING APPROVAL OR SHOWING OFF; IT WAS A SERIOUS COMMITMENT TO SELF-MASTERY AND FACING HIS REALITY. HE BELIEVED THAT SHARP MENTAL STRENGTH SHOULD BE PAIRED WITH PHYSICAL RESILIENCE. BY COMMITTING TO INTENSE WORKOUTS TWICE A WEEK, BEYBLADE BEGAN REBUILDING HIS FOUNDATION—PROVING TO HIMSELF, REP BY REP, THAT HE HAD THE DISCIPLINE TO BECOME THE MAN HE ASPIRED TO BE.



REPLACING ALCOHOL WITH JOGGING, BRISK WALKING, AND PUSH-UP ROUTINES BECAME BEYBLADE'S ULTIMATE VICTORY. HE FULLY EMBRACED A HEALTHY FITNESS LIFESTYLE, PROVING TO HIMSELF THAT IT IS NEVER TOO LATE FOR A NEW BEGINNING. REGAINING THE DISCIPLINE HE HAD LOST BROUGHT A JOYFUL, CHEERFUL LIGHT BACK INTO HIS EYES, WASHING AWAY THE SHADOWS OF HIS PAST. AS HE PUSHED HIS LIMITS EACH WEEK, HE SMILED—REALIZING THAT THE YOUNG, HOPEFUL BOY HE USED TO BE WAS GUIDING HIM ALL ALONG.

XIAN LOOKED UPON CHRISTIAN WITH A WARM SMILE, FILLED WITH PRIDE FOR THE MAN STANDING BEFORE HIM TODAY. 'CHRISTIAN,' XIAN SAID GENTLY, 'I AM SO GLAD YOU REMEMBERED THE BELT OUR GRANDFATHER PASSED DOWN TO US. WEAR IT WITH PRIDE AS A SYMBOL OF OUR LINEAGE—THE TAN FAMILY.' RETURNING THE SMILE, CHRISTIAN UNDERSTOOD XIAN'S TRUE WISH FOR HIM: TO STRIDE CONFIDENTLY INTO HIS FUTURE, CARRY HIS ANCESTRAL SURNAME WITH PRIDE, AND FOREVER CHERISH THE RICH FILIPINO BLOOD FLOWING THROUGH HIS VEINS.

IAN'S FACE LIT UP WITH JOYFUL ENERGY AS HE TURNED TOWARD HIS FUTURE SELF. 'CHRISTIAN, I'M SO HAPPY HERE!' HE CHEERED. 'I KNOW I CRIED A LOT, BUT THINGS ARE SO MUCH BRIGHTER NOW. DON'T GET STUCK LONGING FOR THE PAST—KEEP MOVING FORWARD AND BECOME THE MAN YOU WERE BORN TO BE!' TEARS STREAMED DOWN CHRISTIAN'S FACE AS HE LISTENED. HE FELT OVERWHELMED WITH GRATITUDE, HEARING SUCH PROFOUND STRENGTH AND LOVE FROM THE SENSITIVE, TENDER-HEARTED BOY WHO HAD SURVIVED IT ALL.

FINALLY, BEYBLADE STEPPED FORWARD—A NAME LONG FORGOTTEN OVER THE PASSING YEARS. GAZING PROUDLY AT CHRISTIAN, HIS FUTURE SELF, BEYBLADE DECLARED, 'CHRISTIAN, YOUR PRIDE AND RESOLVE WILL CARRY YOU FAR, BACKED BY THE STRENGTH OF XIAN AND IAN. OUR PAST WAS FILLED WITH BOTH LIGHT AND SHADOW, BUT IT BELONGS TO YESTERDAY. YOU MUST FIGHT BOLDLY FOR TOMORROW, ESPECIALLY AS WE FACE OUR MENTAL HEALTH JOURNEY TOGETHER. WE ARE BUILT TO GROW STRONGER.' IN THAT MOMENT, CHRISTIAN REALIZED BEYBLADE WAS NEVER JUST AN OLD MONIKER: HE WAS THE ULTIMATE EMBLEM OF RESILIENCE, BORN TO CONQUER EVERY SHADOW IN HIS WAY.

CHRISTIAN FINALLY UNDERSTOOD THAT XIAN, IAN, AND BEYBLADE WERE THREE SMALL SPROUTS CULTIVATED BY HIS IMAGINATION—A CREATIVE SHIELD THAT MOLDED HIM INTO THE MAN STANDING TODAY. NOW, HE MEETS EVERY CHALLENGE HEAD-ON, LIKE A NOBLE CAVALIER OF OLD, CELEBRATING HIS INNER VICTORIES LIKE A WARRIOR AFTER A LONG BATTLE. HE KNOWS THAT LIVING WITH BIPOLAR DISORDER IS A UNIQUE GIFT REQUIRING BALANCE, PATIENCE, AND SELF-CARE. CHRISTIAN IS FEARLESS FOR A REASON. HE IS UNBREAKABLE FOR A REASON. ARMED WITH CLARITY AND PURPOSE, HE STEPS INTO HIS CHECKUP —READY TO EMBRACE THE NEXT CHAPTER OF HIS LIFE.

AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, A COMFORTING TRUTH SETTLED INTO HIS HEART: HE WAS NEVER TRULY ALONE. SURROUNDING CHRISTIAN WERE HIS FAMILY, HIS FRIENDS, AND THE QUIET PRESENCE OF GOD. HE WASN'T DEFINED BY MOVIE STEREOTYPES OR TRAGIC STORIES; HE WAS SIMPLY A GIFTED, WARM-HEARTED YOUNG MAN WHO LOVED TO HELP EVERYONE AROUND HIM. HE REALIZED THAT LIVING WITH BIPOLAR DISORDER IS NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF —IT IS A NORMAL PART OF HIS HUMAN JOURNEY. TRUE PEACE CAME WHEN HE CHOSE TO FORGIVE THOSE WHO HAD HURT HIM AND HIS LOVED ONES, LETTING GO OF PAST WOUNDS AND SEEKING DIVINE GUIDANCE. EVERY MORNING BRINGS A FRESH START, AND EVERY DAY IS A BEAUTIFUL GIFT.

TODAY, CHRISTIAN STANDS READY FOR HIS CHECKUP. AS HE DRIFTS OFF TO SLEEP, LET US CHEER HIM ON AND PRAY FOR HIS STRENGTH TO OVERCOME DEPRESSION AND FIND HEALING. CHRISTIAN KNOWS HOW DEEPLY MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS; IT REMINDS US THAT EVERYONE FIGHTING SILENT BATTLES DESERVES GENTLE CARE. WE MUST EMBRACE THOSE STRUGGLING WITH RAW EMOTIONS, SURROUNDING THEM WITH THE UNCONDITIONAL LOVE GOD SHOWS TO US ALL. NOW, CHRISTIAN'S HEART IS AT PEACE. RESTING QUIETLY, HE PREPARES FOR TOMORROW—READY TO LEARN HOW TO MANAGE HIS EMOTIONS, HEAL DEEPLY, AND WALK IN SAFETY AND LIGHT.

THIS STORY SERVES AS AN INSPIRATION TO US ALL: STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL HEALTH DOES NOT MEAN YOU ARE BROKEN OR BAD. IT IS A CHALLENGING GIFT FROM GOD—A PATH WE CAN WALK WITH COURAGE AND SELF-LOVE. EVERY HUMAN LIFE HOLDS EQUAL WORTH IN THE WORLD JESUS CREATED, AND THE DREAMS WE HOLD CLOSE TO OUR HEARTS CAN BECOME REALITY. TODAY, CHRISTIAN STEPS FORWARD TO STAND UP FOR HIMSELF AND FACE HIS WORLD HEAD-ON. IN THE END, HE SHOWED US THAT IT'S OKAY TO REACH OUT—BECAUSE SOMETIMES, ALL WE REALLY NEED IS A HELPING HAND.

I know it's been a year or two years since my last check-up, and all I know..... is I still need help.

THE END